

MUDDY WATERS

(McKINLEY MORGANFIELD)

First Recording Sessions
1941-1946
In Chronological Order

document

RECORDS

DOCD-5146

document**RECORDS**

DOCD-5146

Compiled and produced
by Johnny Parth
Eipeldauerstr. 23/43/5
A-1220 Vienna, Austria

Remastering:
Studio Klement
Booklet Notes:
Jake Gittes

© 1992 by Document Records

MADE IN AUSTRIA



MUDDY WATERS

First Recording Sessions 1941-1946

In Chronological Order

1. Country Blues
2. I Be's Troubled
3. Ramblin' Kid Blues (Son Simms Four)
4. Rosalie (Son Simms Four)
5. Joe Turner Blues (Louis Ford, vcl.)
6. Pearly May Blues (Percy Thomas, vcl.)
7. Take A Walk With Me
8. Burr Clover Blues
9. I Be Bound To Write To You
10. You Gonna Miss Me When I'm Gone
11. You Got To Take Sick And Die Some Of These Days
12. Why Don't You Live So God Can Use You
13. Country Blues (No. 2)
14. Mean Red Spider
15. I'm Gonna Cut Your Head (Homer Harris, vcl.)
16. Atomic Bomb Blues (Homer Harris, vcl.)
17. Tommorrow Will Be Too Late (Homer Harris, vcl.)
18. Jitterbug Blues
19. Hard Day Blues
20. Buryin' Ground Blues
21. Come To Me Baby (James "Beale Street" Clark, vcl.)
22. You Can't Make The Grade (James "Beale Street" Clark, vcl.)

Bonus Tracks:**BABY FACE LEROY & MUDDY WATERS (1950)**

23. Rollin' And Tumblin' Pt. 1
24. Rollin' And Tumblin' Pt. 2

It's impossible to listen to Muddy Waters' first recordings without an awareness of everything that came after; and in many ways, it's distortive to try, for it was these sessions that aroused thoughts of professionalism and commercial recording in the young Waters. Nevertheless, it's important to realise that what Alan Lomax heard in 1941–1942 was not yet the embryonic sound of Chicago blues, but rather the latest developments in the guitar blues of Coahoma County, Mississippi. Muddy, then in his twenties, had taken up the guitar in 1932, inspired by Son Simms and "Scott Bowhandle" (Bohannon?), but above all he was influenced by the bottleneck playing of his neighbour Son House. Muddy knew and admired Robert Johnson's recordings – he was aware that Johnson had recorded "Walkin' Blues" to the tune he himself used for "**Country Blues**" – but as John Cowley has established, he took little directly from Johnson; rather, both men were pupils of Son House, and it was from House that they both acquired the "Walking Blues" theme.

"**Country Blues**" and "**I Be's Troubled**", a song which is one of the most concise statements of what it is to have the blues, were compelling enough to bring Lomax back the following year, not only to explore Muddy's solo repertoire more extensively, but also to make valuable recordings of him, Percy Thomas and Louis Ford playing in the string band led by Son Simms, generally identified as Charley Patton's former fiddle player, Henry Sims. These are invaluable examples of a poorly documented genre, as well as being great entertainment in their own right; never more so than on "**Joe Turner Blues**" (in which Muddy doesn't take part), a riotous dance tune whose lyrics deal with the grim subject of the "long chain man" who delivered prisoners to the penitentiary.

Simms switched to guitar to back Muddy on "**Take A Walk With Me**" (probably learned by hearing Robert Lockwood on the radio) and "**Burr Clover Blues**", a tribute to Waters' bossman and his plantation that reflected a genuine affection for Howard Stovall and his family that lasted all his life. Charley Berry, who was Muddy's brother-in-law, and a fine singer of field hollers, played effective second guitar on a rewrite of "**I Be's Troubled**", and on "**You Gonna Miss Me When I'm Gone**" which, like "**I Be's Troubled**", was to be the basis of a later commercial recording. The exact order of recording of the 1942 performances is uncertain, but the final accession numbers were allocated to Muddy solo, with two spirituals (though even one of these later became the blues "Diamonds At Your Feet"), a second version of "Country Blues", and a "32-20 Blues" that unfortunately suffered from severe speed fluctuations.

By 1946, Muddy Waters was in Chicago, and eager to record. At that time, the kingpins of prewar race recording, J. Mayo Williams and Lester Melrose, were still hanging on in the business, but both were out of touch with the changes that had come over black music during the gap in recording caused by World War II and the Petrillo ban. Williams was running a variety of small labels, and leasing material to other independents; on one such leased record, issued as by James "Sweet Lucy" Carter, there appeared Muddy's first commercial release. "**Mean Red Spider**" features an unfortunate soprano saxophone, but for all its faults the seeds of the future are all there.

Musically more successful was the session held by Melrose at Columbia later that year, at which Muddy made three unissued titles, and backed the handsome, powerful-voiced (but also unissued) Homer Harris, and James (Beale Street) Clark, also known as Memphis Jimmy, who set up the date, and made the only issued sides from it. The session was Janus-faced; the repertoire and song structures often looked back to the 40s, but Clark's piano featured the hammering triplets, developed by Big Maceo and Johnny Jones, that were to become the trademark of Chicago blues bands, above all under the hands of Otis Spann. Muddy Waters' guitar playing, too, clearly belongs to the future, and his singing, compared to that on the Library of Congress sides, comes from a man accustomed to projecting above the din of Southside clubs.

Shortly after this session, Waters joined the Chess brothers' Aristocrat Records. Like Melrose, Len & Phil Chess at first didn't know what to make of Muddy's music, but after "I Can't Be Satisfied", hit big, their commitment to the new developments was enthusiastic. So keen on the formula of Muddy plus Big Crawford's swinging bass were Len and Phil Chess, indeed, that Muddy soon became dissatisfied at their refusal to record him with his full band. The result was an extra-contractual session for Parkway, with Little Walter and Baby Face Leroy Foster. The two-part "**Rollin' and Tumblin'**", apart from being one of the greatest of all blues records, was the revolutionary manifesto of the postwar Chicago blues. Len Chess's first reaction, understandably, was an angry one, but Aristocrat eventually responded like any sensible aristocrat faced with revolt, by surrendering. Muddy was soon recording with his band, the public were buying the records, and the rest was history. In a few years, Muddy had come a long way, personally, geographically, and musically, from "Mister Stovall's Farm".

© 1992 document records

Jake Gittes

1. Country Blues	4770-A-1-LC AAFS-18	(A)	3:24	
2. I Be's Troubled	4770-A-2-LC AAFS-18	(A)	3:00	41
3. Ramblin' Kid Blues	6628-A-6-LC unissued	(B)	3:14	
4. Rosalie	6628-A-7-LC unissued	(B)	2:58	
5. Joe Turner Blues	6628-A-8-LC unissued	(B)	2:43	
6. Pearlle May Blues	6628-B-1-LC unissued	(B)	3:21	
7. Take A Walk With Me	6628-B-2-LC unissued	(C)	2:55	
8. Burr Clover Blues	6628-B-3-LC unissued	(C)	3:10	
9. I Be Bound To Write To You	6629-A-1-LC unissued	(C)	3:16	49
10. You Gonna Miss Me When I'm Gone	6629-A-3-LC unissued	(C)	3:14	
11. You Got To Take Sick And Die Some Of These Days	6666-A-3-LC unissued	(D)	2:05	
12. Why Don't You Live So God Can Use You	6666-B-1-LC unissued	(D)	2:05	
13. Country Blues (No. 2)	6666-B-2-LC unissued	(D)	3:32	
14. Mean Red Spider	B-20th Century 20-51	(E)	2:20	
15. I'm Gonna Cut Your Head	CCO-4649-Co unissued	(F)	2:50	
16. Atomic Bomb Blues	CCO-4650-Co unissued	(F)	2:30	
17. Tomorrow Will Be Too Late	CCO-4651-Co unissued	(F)	3:00	
18. Jitterbug Blues	CCO-4652-Co unissued	(G)	2:49	46
19. Hard Day Blues	CCO-4653-Co unissued	(G)	2:44	
20. Buryin' Ground Blues	CCO-4654-Co unissued	(G)	2:42	
21. Come To Me Baby	CCO-4655-1-Co 37391	(H)	2:47	
22. You Can't Make The Grade	CCO-4656-1-Co 37391	(H)	2:52	
23. Rollin' And Tumblin' Pt. 1	H-513-Parkway 501	(I)	2:53	
24. Rollin' And Tumblin' Pt. 2	H-514-Parkway 501	(I)	2:44	50

NOTE: Muddy Waters' complete 1947-1967 recordings are available on Charly RED BOX 3 (9 CD's).

PERSONNEL:

- A: Muddy Waters (McKinley Morganfield), vcl/gtr. _____ Stovall's Plantation, Miss., c. 24-31 August 1941
- B: Son Simms Four: Muddy Waters, gtr/vcl on 3, 4; Percy Thomas, gtr/vcl on 6; Son Simms (prob. Henry Sims), vln; Louis Ford, mand/vcl on 5; members of the group, foot-tapping/vcl interjections on 3, 4, 5. _____ Stovall's Plantation, Miss., 24 July 1942
- C: Muddy Waters, vcl/gtr; Son Simms, gtr added on 7, 8; Charles Berry, gtr added on 9, 10. _____ Stovall's Plantation, Miss., 24 July 1942
- D: Muddy Waters, vcl/gtr. _____ Clarksdale, Miss., poss. 20-24 July 1942
- E: Muddy Waters (as James "Sweet Lucy" Carter), vcl/gtr; Alex Atkins, ss; poss. Lee Brown or prob. Sunnyland Slim, pno; prob. Homer Harris, gtr; unknown, b; unknown, d. _____ Chicago, 1946
- F: Homer Harris, vcl; acc. James Clark, pno; Muddy Waters, gtr; Ransom Knowing, b; Judge Riley, d. _____ Chicago, 27 September 1946
- G: Muddy Waters, vcl/gtr; James Clark, pno; Ransom Knowing, b; Judge Riley, d. _____ Chicago, 27 September 1946
- H: James (Beale Street) Clark, vcl/pno; Muddy Waters, poss. Leroy Foster, gtrs; Ransom Knowing, b; prob. Judge Riley, d. _____ Chicago, 27 September 1946
- I: Baby Face Leroy Foster, vcl/d; Little Walter, vcl/hca; Muddy Waters, vcl/gtr. _____ Chicago, January 1950

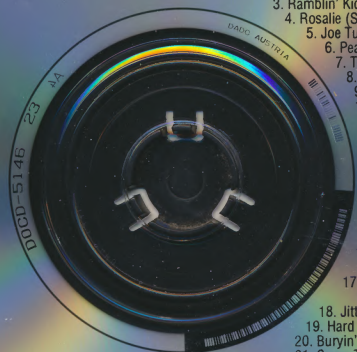
MUDDY WATERS

First Recording Sessions 1941-1946
In Chronological Order

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO

AUSTRO
MECHANA

A A D



1. Country Blues
 2. I Be's Troubled
 3. Ramblin' Kid Blues (Son Simms Four)
 4. Rosalie (Son Simms Four)
 5. Joe Turner Blues (Louis Ford, vcl.)
 6. Pearly May Blues (Percy Thomas, vcl.)
 7. Take A Walk With Me
 8. Burr Clover Blues
 9. I Be Bound To Write To You
 10. You Gonna Miss Me When I'm Gone
 11. You Got To Take Sick And Die
Some Of These Days
 12. Why Don't You Live So God
Can Use You
 13. Country Blues (No. 2)
 14. Mean Red Spider
 15. I'm Gonna Cut Your Head
(Homer Harris, vcl.)
 16. Atomic Bomb Blues
(Homer Harris, vcl.)
 17. Tomorrow Will Be Too Late
(Homer Harris, vcl.)
 18. Jitterbug Blues
 19. Hard Day Blues
 20. Buryin' Ground Blues
 21. Come To Me Baby
(James "Beale Street" Clark, vcl.)
 22. You Can't Make The Grade
(James "Beale Street" Clark, vcl.)
- Bonus Tracks: BABY FACE LEROY
& MUDDY WATERS (1950)**
23. Rollin' And Tumblin' Pt. 1
 24. Rollin' And Tumblin' Pt. 2

document

RECORDS

DOCD-5146